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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT
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Wednesday, January 27, 1937
U. S. Department of Agriculture

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "COOKED MEAT DISHES." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

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Listeners, in the files of meat recipes at the Bureau of Home Economics, the directions for making dishes from canned meat stand side by side with those for using left-over cooked meat. The foods people have them filed together because they say that you can generally use canned meat and other cooked meat in the same way. They say the principles of "making over" cooked meat are the same.

As you probably know by this time, these food scientists are great on principles. You might say that their lives are guided by the best principles -- their laboratory-lives at least. And from what I've seen -- and tasted -- of the results, I'd say that cooking by principle pays.

Of course, you know -- every cook knows that meat that is recooked is likely to lack flavor. It usually hasn't as much flavor as it had after just one cooking. So one of the first principles that the foods people hold to, in making up a dish from canned meat or other previously cooked meat, is: Save all possible flavor. And the second principle is: Add extra flavor in the form of other flavorful foods and good seasoning when necessary.

How to save all possible meat flavor in using cooked meat? Well, make the most of every bit of gravy, drippings and "broth" stewed from the bones. In other words: "Lick the platter clean" -- and the roasting and frying pan, too. Then, you can often develop or intensify the meat flavor -- give it that good browned taste by browning the meat in drippings or other fat before adding it to the rest of the mixture. And finally, you can save flavor by the minimum of recooking. You'll find that most of the recipes worked out by the foods people say: "Heat the meat thoroughly," and that's all. Just heat the meat; don't cook it again. Repeated long cookings take all the taste from any meat.

Still another way to conserve meat flavor is to add water and flour sparingly to any cooked meat combination. Too much will dilute or weaken the flavor and make the finished dish tasteless.

So much for saving flavor. Now about adding it. Here you can call to your aid all those dependable flavorful vegetables -- tomatoes, onions, green peppers, celery, parsley, even cabbage and turnips on occasion. And then you can also rely on a great variety of spices and seasonings like curry, celery salt or celery leaves, cloves, caraway, pepper, Tabasco sauce and garlic.

So much for principles. Now to put them into practice. Let's see how to use them to make quick main dishes for dinner. To choose a familiar illustration, let's see how these principles work out in making hash -- good, old-

fashioned Southern hash. Chop up the tidbits from yesterday's roast or steak, or chop up the meat from the can. Along with the meat you'll need some gravy or meat broth to moisten the mixture and also some raw or cooked potatoes and some onion and green pepper. (If you have no gravy or broth, you can make some by dissolving a couple of bouillon cubes in hot water.)

With the makings on hand, your first step is to brown the chopped or diced meat in drippings or other fat. Second, dice the potatoes and slice the onion and green pepper. Brown these vegetables along with the meat. Then add the gravy or broth, season to taste, and cook slowly on top of the stove or bake in the oven until the hash is brown on top.

Nothing is more delectable than a good hash -- or more unappetizing than a poor one. The care you take in preparing it -- the principles you go by make all the difference. Good hash is quick and easy to make but, you see, it needs thoughtful preparation just the same.

Chopped canned or left-over meat also makes good croquettes and stuffed peppers. In both cases, you add such seasonings as onion, and parsley, and for the peppers, also chili sauce or catsup. In both cases, success depends a good deal on careful seasoning and quick cooking.

Two favorite foreign dishes that you can make quickly from left-over meat tidbits or from canned meat are chop suey and curry. Neither of these requires much cooking but both need careful seasoning.

Since curries are favorite dishes with the men of the family -- good hot mixtures for a winter night, I'd like to give you the suggestions of the foods people for making them from canned or cooked meat. They say you can use any chopped cooked meat -- pork, lamb, veal, or beef. (You can also make curries from fish and poultry.) A pint of chopped meat will make enough curry for 5 or 6.

One of the interesting points about meat curries is that you use both apples and onions in the mixture. Start the curry by cooking sliced onions and sliced tart apples together in 2 or 3 tablespoons of meat drippings or other fat. For a pint of cooked meat you'll need 1 onion and a quart of sliced apples. Cover and cook in the fat until tender. Then add the meat and heat thoroughly. If the mixture is too thick, thin it slightly with gravy or broth or water. Season with curry powder and salt. And serve hot with flaky boiled rice. How much curry powder? That depends on how spicy you like your mixtures. Here's a case where the good cook tastes and tastes again as she adds the seasoning.

Still other ways to use cooked meat are meat sandwiches, meat pies, and creamed mixtures. An interesting form of meat pie is a meat turnover. Turnovers are good for using up tidbits. And they are convenient for serving individual plates. Here's the way to make them. Season chopped cooked or canned meat with onion and celery or parsley. Moistened the meat with gravy, broth, tomatoes or chili sauce. Add salt and pepper to taste. Then make a rich dough -- your biscuit recipe with the amount of fat doubled. Roll the dough in rounds. On each round put some of the seasoned meat filling. Fold the edges of the dough together to make turnovers. And bake a few minutes in a hot oven.

That's all the news I have about cooked meat dishes today. But don't forget those principles of saving the flavor of the meat and adding flavor thoughtfully.

